



EXHIBITION OF THE WORKS OF INDUSTRY OF ALL NATIONS, 1851.

COLLECTION OF SPECIMENS EXHIBITED.

Her Majesty's Commissioners for the Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations have had under their consideration several suggestions to form and preserve a record of those articles in the Exhibition which are calculated to be of use for future consultation, and having regard to the public advantages which would be likely to arise from forming such a record have authorized the Executive Committee to make preparations for carrying the proposal into effect, and to collect actual specimens of certain of the materials and fabrics themselves exhibited, so far as it may be possible, and where not possible, to obtain accurate representations of them.

Before entering into communication with each Exhibitor, and seeking his co-operation in forming this collection, the Executive Committee consider it proper to state generally some of the uses which it is conceived would result from it. It will be obvious, that the verbal description of the objects exhibited, which forms the Catalogue, will perpetuate the Exhibition in a very imperfect way, and although diagrams and pictorial representations of the objects afford a partial remedy, they cannot be compared with specimens of the objects themselves, for conveying an accurate idea of them. It therefore follows, that records of the articles exhibited can only be obtained by means of specimens of them; and it is now proposed to adopt this principle, as far as it may be practicable, and thus register, in the most unmistakeable form, for the use of after ages, the discoveries and uses of various materials, and show the progress which human industry had made in the present year, so far as it was developed in the Exhibition. The collection will serve as a valuable means of reference for commercial, scientific, and artistic purposes; it will enable a strictly philosophical classification of the objects to be made, and render a comparison of them easy, which was unattainable in the present geographical arrangement of the Exhibition.

Any successful realization of the proposed plan must depend upon the co-operation of the Exhibitors, and their appreciation of its uses. A merchant, importer, or manufacturer, will easily understand the advantage which he would derive from the existence of a systematic collection, always accessible, of specimens of any given kind of Raw Materials or Manufactures, when he had occasion to consult them. It may, therefore, be expected that the interest of each Exhibitor will induce him to aid in forming the proposed collection, by presenting, as far as practicable, specimens of the materials or fabrics which he is exhibiting. Every Exhibitor hitherto consulted on this subject, has cordially welcomed the proposal, and has promised every assistance in carrying it into effect, by freely contributing both actual specimens, and every information concerning them which may be desired.

In forming the Collection, different kinds of treatment will have to be adopted towards the various classes of articles. In respect of the Department of Raw Materials, constituting the four first Classes of the Exhibition, it will be desirable to collect specimens of the actual articles themselves, and Exhibitors will be requested to place small duplicate specimens at the disposal of the Commissioners. But this principle, for reasons of cost, size, &c., will not apply, as a general rule, to machinery and articles of cubical bulk, such as Metal Manufactures, Furniture, Pottery, Sculpture, &c. It is proposed to obtain a record of these, with the permission of the Exhibitors, where it may be desirable to have it, by means either of accurate drawings or Talbotypes. Those cases where the representation of the article is preferred to the article itself, will be hereafter pointed out. As respects the remaining Classes of the Exhibition, such as all kinds of Woven Fabrics, in Cotton, Wool, Flax, Silk, &c., all Felted and laid Fabrics, Paper-hangings, Leathers, &c., it is proposed to collect duplicate specimens of the articles themselves.

It is also intended to collect all Price Lists, Trade Catalogues, Circulars, and Prospectuses prepared by the Exhibitors, and to bind them in Classes.

Her Majesty's Commissioners intend that this Collection shall be turned to the greatest public use; and they think that, when formed, it will occupy only the space of a moderate-sized room.

Instructions suitable to each Class of Exhibitors will be prepared and addressed to the Exhibitors, through the Superintendents, who will give any further information on the subject.

Any communications on this subject should be addressed to Lieutenant Tyler, R.E., Offices of the Executive Committee.

*Exhibition, Hyde Park,
18th July, 1851.*

M. DIGBY WYATT,
Secretary to the Executive Committee.